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# Conserving energy, reducing foot print one project at a time

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11/18/2011 - **LAUGHLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFNS)** -- With today's fiscal limitations and focus on doing more with less, officials here are finding ways to save energy and money while getting the mission done.

Executive orders state energy usage must be reduced by three percent and water usage by two percent annually until 2012, and members of Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, have embraced the order and began to deliver.

During the past two years, members of the 47th Civil Engineer Squadron and senior leaders here began targeting older buildings that are less energy efficient and expensive to maintain. Demolishing or closing those facilities will reduce the energy foot print by conserving energy and saving money.

"In order for us to execute savings from the (civil engineer) perspective, a lot of it has to do with the amount of facilities we have to maintain," said Jennifer Harris, a member of the 47th CES civil engineer.

In September, the old base movie theater and old temporary living facilities were approved for demolition. Although the TLFs officially closed in 2006, up to \$20,000 was saved from routine maintenance and utilities.

Harris also said the demolition and consolidation list for 2012 was recently submitted and could potentially demolish or close 21 buildings, saving around \$996,000 on maintenance and utilities.

While the consolidation program seems to be the largest savings plan, there are many other on-going projects at Laughlin AFB helping conserve energy and water.

In September, David Morin, from the 47th CES, and senior leaders noticed a pond on the base golf course wasn't retaining water correctly and decided to do something about it. After looking into the problem, Morin realized it was losing approximately one million gallons a month.

Instead of constantly filling the pond, they decided to allow the pond to drain due high water usage. The saved water consumption cost should be around \$23,000 a year.

"We are recognized as a leader in our community, and we have to be good stewards of our local resources by looking closely at our processes and making them more efficient," Morin said.

Other processes that have been worked on or are ongoing are:

- Due to the hot and dry climate in the area, key irrigation areas were chosen and upgraded and savings are estimated to be around \$100,000.
- No Heat No Cool: An initiative that helps regulate drastic temperature changes inside work centers between summer and winter seasons, which saves about \$75,000.
- Christmas shutdown: A time when temperatures are dropped in empty work centers, no flying takes place and maintenance is reduced to save \$20,000.
- A base-wide night lighting reduction scheme now turn off any unnecessary lights and put timers on lights that are needed for an appropriate time frame, which is estimated to save approximately \$8,000 yearly.

"Laughlin is making great strides to conserve water, energy and ultimately money," Morin said. "With wing leadership's support, we have looked base wide at our processes and identified areas that could be more efficient. In these times of limited funds, it is especially critical that we all look around our areas for energy and water savings opportunities."

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